



#### **In this edition:**

ESI's CDD Landfill - The Need for Compromise: Much has been said of the pros and cons of extending the life of the Lorton landfill. I outline my thoughts on this hotly debated issue below, and believe there is a compromise to be made between ESI and the community.

High School Graduations Underway at George Mason - Know Before You Go: It's graduation season and that means thousands of people will be using the Patriot Center to watch their loved ones walk across the stage. Know when these graduations are so you can avoid the traffic.

Braddock Park Mini Golf Course Public Meeting: The Park Authority is evaluating options to reopen or re-purpose the closed mini-golf course located in Braddock Park and would like to gauge interest and ideas from the public. They will be hosting a meeting at the Mott Community Center on June 12th at 7pm.

2014 Fairfax 50+ Plan: Fairfax County projects a dramatic increase in its older population. Between 2005 and 2030, the county expects the 50 and over population to increase by 40 percent and the 70 and over population by 88 percent. This will have an impact on the way the County provides services. See below for full details.

VDOT's Mowing Season is Now Underway: Crews are now working on VDOT's first mowing cycle of the season. These crews will be visible along the roadside mowing grass, pruning trees, cutting brush, and picking up litter. See below on how you can report areas that have sight distance issues.

#### **ESI's CDD Landfill - The Need for Compromise**

Many residents have contacted my office regarding the request by Enviro Solutions Incorporated (ESI) to extend the height and operating period of its Construction Demolition and Debris (CDD) landfill in Lorton. This case has become a lightning rod in the communities in South County and I have heard passionate appeals on both sides of the issue. As Fairfax County gets fully built out, land use decisions become even more important and more difficult. The decision to extend and/or expand the CDD landfill in Lorton is no exception. Overly simplified it pits the impact of the growing South County community against the need for a CDD landfill in Fairfax County. In truth it is much

more complicated as demonstrated by the 100 or so speakers at the public hearing and the literally thousands of emails and signatures on petitions.

**Note:** CDD landfills do not handle the waste from homes and businesses - in Fairfax County that waste is recycled or burned for energy. CDD waste is everything from polluted dirt to concrete slabs from demolition.

**The proposal:** In 2007 ESI asked approval for an expansion of the landfill to a height of 412 feet with a proffer to cease operations on January 1st, 2019 and dedicate the landfill site to the Park Authority. Upon closing, ESI was to build Overlook Ridge Park on top of the landfill. The County Attorney then took the park off of the table due to perceived liability concerns. ESI has now submitted a proposal to expand the landfill by building a berm (up to 70 feet high) around the landfill, extend its operation until 2040 build a "green energy park", and provide approximately \$15M in additional payments to the county. The South County community would like to see the landfill closed due largely to the truck traffic, visual impact of the landfill, and safety concerns relating to the berm. Most of the community and the Sierra Club also has concerns with the so called "green energy park."

**My thoughts:** Like most of the members of the Board of Supervisors that I have spoken to, I wish we had a better option in front of us. While there was some attempt at compromise, I believe more should have been done to arrive at a better proposal. I still believe that a compromise is possible and is the way to move forward. I have shared some of my thoughts below:

- **The need for a CDD landfill:** The County's Chambers of Commerce are supporting this expansion based primarily on the need for a CDD landfill in Fairfax to support the county's development and redevelopment in Tysons, Reston, Springfield and elsewhere. The county does not track CDD and does not have projections on our CDD landfill requirements. I can clearly understand the need for the county to have a way to dispose of CDD without it adding significantly to the cost of housing and office space. While some CDD waste can be recycled there is much that cannot be. The development community has been relatively quiet during this discussion and I am reaching out to them to try to determine the real need.
- **Problems with the "Green Energy Park":** Billed by ESI and several members of the Board as a "green energy demonstration project" it is more of a demonstration of what not to do. While the methane recovery proposed by the applicant is environmentally beneficial and should be done, the other three aspects - wind turbines, solar, and geothermal - have significant problems. Even the Sierra Club has called the demonstration project "green washing." For instance there is no way to utilize geothermal energy created by the project - you cannot put geothermal energy on the grid and there is no current or projected need for the energy created close by - so why create it? ESI should remove these components from the application and contribute these funds towards county priorities like schools, roads, parks, public safety (South County needs a police station), or libraries.
- **Concerns with the Berm:** Both County staff and I have serious concerns on the long term cost and maintenance of the new berms supporting the landfill expansion. I understand there is a new proffer being drafted by ESI to address the liability concerns but I am yet to see it. Berms of this nature are relatively new and I believe we need to be cautious because of the potential for significant impact.

**The Way Forward:** I believe the way forward here is a compromise. Based on what I have heard on both sides of the issue and as I discussed above I think the following compromise makes sense:

- No berms or expansion of the landfill. This would eliminate many of the aesthetic concerns of the community and the County and my liability concerns on the berm.
- Allow ESI to keep the landfill open until 2025 using the approved existing capacity. Currently this capacity is expected to address needs until 2022 but this could be extended by limiting the type and geography of debris accepted. This gives the private sector and the County time to address the CDD waste needs and develop alternatives.
- Put any proffers from ESI towards South County priorities - I would suggest the much needed South County police station or parks - and not to a poorly developed green energy demonstration project.

Unfortunately, the Board cannot decide to change the proposal in front of it unilaterally, only ESI can do that, and I will work with them to make it happen.

I have heard very strong arguments on both sides of the issue and many important factors must be considered. Just as importantly the hyperbole needs to be filtered out. At the end of the day, I will vote for the proposal that strikes what I perceive to be the best balance between what makes business sense for redevelopment and landfill capacity needs, and what makes sense to the community. I believe that there is a compromise to be had in which both parties, ESI and the community, receive a mutually beneficial outcome and I am committed to working toward that goal.

### **High School Graduations Underway at George Mason - Know Before You Go**

High school graduations at the Patriot Center began on June 1. Mason is host to over two dozen area high school graduations this year with attendance at the ceremonies ranging from 2,500 to 6,300 graduates and their family members. Each ceremony lasts approximately two hours.

Be prepared for heavier traffic up to 90 minutes prior to each ceremony and allow more time to drive past or to and from campus. Mason will be best accessed through entrances off of University Drive or Roberts Road. The heaviest tie ups are on Braddock Road and 123.

For the full schedule, please visit:

<http://relations.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/2014-High-School-Graduation-Schedule.pdf>

### **Braddock Park Mini Golf Course Public Meeting**

The Park Authority is evaluating options to reopen or re-purpose the closed mini-golf course located in Braddock Park and would like to gauge interest and ideas from the public. They will be hosting a meeting at the Mott Community Center on June 12<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.

This public comment meeting will help facilitate a community discussion about the future of the mini-golf course. To get additional information about the project or ways to participate, please visit the project website at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/braddock-park.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/braddock-park.htm) or contact the Public Information Office at [parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 703-324-8662. If you wish to speak at the meeting, please contact the Public Information Office or sign up at the meeting.

### **2014 Fairfax 50+ Plan**

Fairfax County projects a dramatic increase in its older population. Between 2005 and 2030, the county expects the 50 and over population to increase by 40 percent and the 70 and over population by 88 percent. I have the great privilege to lead the Board's effort to update its 2007 50+ Plan. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, together with the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging, has been working with the community to create the **2014 Fairfax 50+ Plan**. During the summer of 2013, over 800 people offered their ideas at forums held throughout the county. Work teams composed of business and nonprofit representatives, community members and county staff, reviewed the community's ideas and proposed initiatives for the Board of Supervisors' consideration.

These initiatives are now available online for your input and comment. Please go to this link - <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/fairfax50plus.htm>; You will find the initiatives under the topic headings of Safety & Health, Housing, Transportation, Community Engagement, Services for Older Adults & Caregivers, and Long-Range Planning & Trends Analysis. Feel free to share your comments by emailing [DFSCommunity@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:DFSCommunity@fairfaxcounty.gov). The comment period will be open until June 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **VDOT's Mowing Season is Now Underway**

Just a reminder-crews are now working on VDOT's first mowing cycle of the season. These crews will be visible along the roadside mowing grass, pruning trees, cutting brush, and picking up litter. According to VDOT, most roads will see up to three cycles of mowing through the fall, but crews may increase that frequency in locations where safety issues and weather patterns require. This first round of mowing is expected to be completed by mid-June.

According to Branco Vlacich, VDOT's district maintenance engineer for northern Virginia, VDOT's "priority is giving drivers, cyclists and pedestrians a clear and safe view of their route. While we have sought ways to keep our mowing plan frugal, we also give crews and contractors the flexibility to address problem areas along roadsides and in medians."

VDOT asks that you report problem areas where vegetation is impeding sight distance. To report these locations, visit VDOT's "report a road problem" page at <http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/citizen.asp> or by calling 800-367-7623 (800-FOR-ROAD), TTY 711.